homework 1

Semantics 3, UCLA Linguistics

due April 4, 2022

Cross-sentential anaphora is real! Consider this utterance:

(1)   A toddler walked in. She fell down.

  A. Provide truth conditions for the sequence of sentences (ignoring tense for now, you can just use the verbs **walked** and **fell-down**).

  B. In your semantics, how is the indefinite analyzed? The pronoun? (You can use informal language here.)

Now consider this utterance:

(2)   A toddler might walk in. She would fall down.

  C. Provide truth conditions for the sequence of sentences, ignoring tense for now.

  D. There seems to be a similar phenomenon here. How is the modal *might* analyzed? How about *would*?

  E. Try to add tenses to your truth conditions for (1) (don't worry about modals here). Does this tense sequencing seem like it should receive a parallel treatment to the individual and modal semantics to you? Why or why not?

Bonus exercise: Consider the transitive versions of these sentences below.

(3)   [A toddler]^i might have [a toy car]^j. She$_i$ would vroom it$_j$.

(4)   [A toddler]^i might have [a toy car]^j. *She$_i$ keeps it$_j$ in her bed.

  F. Informally characterize what you think is going on here with the licensing of *it* in each second sentence. What challenges (if any) do these sentences pose for standard syntactic accounts of anaphora? What challenges (if any) do they pose for standard semantic accounts of anaphora?

Credit where credit is due: **Modal subordination**
Roberts, Craige. 1989. Modal Subordination and Pronominal Anaphora in Discourse. *Linguistics & Philosophy* 12.6:683-721.